



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/939,227	08/24/2001	David Eugene Hirth	D5407-25	4072

7590 11/19/2001

Richard T Redano
Duane Morris & Heckscher LLP
One Greenway Plaza
Suite 500
Houston, TX 77046

EXAMINER

TSAY, FRANK

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3672

DATE MAILED: 11/19/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/939,227

Applicant(s)
Hirth

Examiner
Frank S. Tsay

Art Unit
3672



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE three MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Aug 24, 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 2 20) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 3672

DETAILED ACTION

Reissue Applications

1. This application is objected to under 37 CFR 1.172(a) as the assignee has not established its ownership interest in the patent for which reissue is being requested. An assignee must establish its ownership interest in order to support the consent to a reissue application required by 37 CFR 1.172(a). The assignee's ownership interest is established by:

(a) filing in the reissue application evidence of a chain of title from the original owner to the assignee, or

(b) specifying in the record of the reissue application where such evidence is recorded in the Office (e.g., reel and frame number, etc.).

The submission with respect to (a) and (b) to establish ownership must be signed by a party authorized to act on behalf of the assignee. See MPEP § 1410.01.

An appropriate paper satisfying the requirements of 37 CFR 3.73 must be submitted in reply to this Office action.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 21-36 are objected to because of the following informalities: Rule 37 USC 1.173 states that the specification of the reissue application must include the entire specification and claims of the patent, with the matter to be omitted by reissue enclosed in square brackets; and

Art Unit: 3672

any additions made by reissue be underlined. The newly added claims 21-36 therefore should be underlined. Appropriate correction is required.

Rejection under 35 USC 251

3. Claims 21-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 251 as being an improper recapture of broadened claimed subject matter surrendered in the application for the patent upon which the present reissue is based. See *Hester Industries, Inc. v. Stein, Inc.*, 142 F.3d 1472, 46 USPQ2d 1641 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Clement*, 131 F.3d 1464, 45 USPQ2d 1161 (Fed. Cir. 1997); *Ball Corp. v. United States*, 729 F.2d 1429, 1436, 221 USPQ 289, 295 (Fed. Cir. 1984). A broadening aspect is present in the reissue which was not present in the application for patent. The record of the application for the patent shows that the broadening aspect (in the reissue) relates to subject matter that applicant previously surrendered during the prosecution of the application. Accordingly, the narrow scope of the claims in the patent was not an error within the meaning of 35 USC 251, and the broader scope surrendered in the application for the patent cannot be recaptured by the filing of the present reissue application.

Specifically, the limitations including: “ **a seat assembly for tubular pressure build-up comprising at least a seat supported by a movable body for receiving a member thereon; said seat assembly movable between a first position where the tubular be obstructed by said member, and a second position where flow pass said seat and member; a movement-regulating device operable on said seat assembly to selectively regulate the rate of movement from said first position to said second position.** ”, were present in the claims of

Art Unit: 3672

the original application. The examiner's reasons for allowance in the original application stated that it was those limitations which distinguished over a potential combination of the prior art. Applicant did not present on the record a counter statement or comment as to the examiner's reasons for allowance, and permitted the claims to issue. The omitted limitations are thus established as relating to subject matter previously surrendered.

With recent decisions by the United States Supreme Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which highlight the crucial role of prosecution history in determining the validity and scope of a patent. See, e.g., Warner-Jenkinson Co. v. Hilton Davis Chem. Co., 117 S. Ct. 1040, 41 USPQ2d 1865 (1997); Markman v. Westview Instruments, 52 F.3d 967, 34 USPQ2d 1321 (Fed. Cir. 1995), aff'd 116 S. Ct. 1384, 38 USPQ 2d 1461 (1996); Vitronics Corp. v. Conception Inc., 90 F.3d 1576, 39 USPQ2d 1573 (Fed. Cir. 1996). The examiner's statement of reasons for allowance is considered an important source of prosecution file history. See for example Zenith Labs., Inc. v. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., 19 F.3d 1418; 30 USPQ2d 1285 (Fed. Cir. 1996) which references MPEP 1302.14 to this effect (Footnote of the case).

In view of the recent case law dealing with prosecution history, the failure of an applicant to comment on damaging reasons for allowance would give rise to a presumption of acquiescence to those reasons, and the negative inferences that flow therefrom.

Art Unit: 3672

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1-20 are allowed.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dr. Frank S. Tsay whose telephone number is (703) 308-2170. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. E.T.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. David Bagnell, can be reached on (703) 308-2151. The fax phone number for this Group is (703)305-3597, (703) 305-7687, or (703) 306-4195.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-2168.

Tsay/FT

November 9, 2001

